



P-ISSN 2355-2794

E-ISSN 2461-0275

## The Native English Teachers' Expectations in Teaching EFL Students

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### Abstract

*Research into students' expectations towards native English speakers or teachers has been commonly investigated for years, yet the significant exploration of native teachers' perceptions towards their foreign students are rarely examined. This study tries to find out the Native English Speaker Teachers' (NESTs) expectations in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) students. The data were compared with Gani et al.'s (2015) previous study of EFL learners' expectations toward their native teachers. The participants in this study were two native English teachers who are currently working at Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. The interview was selected as the instrument to collect the data. The interview guide was designed and formulated based on a list of questionnaires that originated from Wu and Ke (2009). The interview with each teacher was recorded and the results were transcribed. The findings show that NESTs generally have similar expectations with the EFL students regarding speaking rate, learning environment, accent preferences, and assignments. However, diverse expectations occurred on the subject of syllabus design, grading system, grammatical correction, and pronunciation articulation. The results are further discussed in the paper. Consequently, the findings of this study can be used as a reference for both native teachers and EFL students in fulfilling the goal of learning in the classroom.*

**Keywords:** Native speakers, teachers, expectation, EFL students.

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**Citation in APA style:** Silviyanti, T. M., Gani, S. A., & Junita, D. (2021). The native English teachers' expectations in teaching EFL students. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 8(1), 212-226.

Received July 4, 2020; Revised December 13, 2020; Accepted December 14, 2020; Published Online January 3, 2021

<https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v8i1.17271>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

There is a never-ending debate about who has the 'better' capacity to teach English to English as a foreign language (EFL) learners; putting an echo of stereotypical belief of proficiency level between the Native English Speaker Teacher (NEST) and the Non-Native English Speaker Teachers (NNEST) in the spotlight. For this reason, an emphasis on equal treatment between both parties is needed to be considered. Despite the arguments about which teacher is the best, the role of both NEST and NNEST in the ELT classroom is beneficial to language learners. [Maum \(2002\)](#) as cited by [Novianti \(2018\)](#) agrees that the non-native teachers' first-hand experiences as EFL learners provide a valuable contribution that shapes their teaching strategies after becoming professional English language teachers. However, it cannot be denied that the native teachers' involvement and contribution in a school or institution attract people as it insinuates an advanced level of educational service. A strong link between how people perceive the language's (i.e., English) origin and its western interlocutor which in turn also influences its teaching methodology ([Holliday, 2005, p. 6](#)) might be one of the reasons for this NEST tendency. This assumption led to discouragement for some non-native teachers, as they believed that they might be rejected thus unqualified to be English teachers ([Gibreel, 2018](#)).

Some educational institutions in Aceh, Indonesia, hire native-English teachers as instructors. Universitas Syiah Kuala, as one of the universities which utilize this NEST-based English language-teaching strategy, employs American native-English teachers to teach English at the Department of English Education and the Language Centre. Evidence suggests that their involvement motivates students to learn the language. It is believed that students can get many benefits by learning from those who 'own the language'.

Several studies regarding students' perception of native-English teachers have been conducted in the past. [Wu and Ke \(2009\)](#) distributed a list of questionnaires to 107 EFL students in Taiwan who were taught by a NEST. The study indicated that most students were willing to have friendly interaction and motivation from their NEST. There were also general expectations of a more relaxed learning environment as well as fewer assignments compared to the NNEST teacher. In general, students express a positive attitude toward the native-English teacher. They want to get as many benefits and advantages as possible through learning with native speakers of the language, something which they might not impose to the same standard from their Non-NEST teachers.

[Gani et al. \(2015\)](#) further adopted the study to be conducted at a public university in Aceh, in which around 42 EFL participants were involved. The result stated that students have a preference for the NESTs who are more friendly in nature. Among 14 other expectations, they emphasized the importance of the teacher's encouragement, grammatical error correction, and following objective time-based syllabus and lesson plan. Most importantly, they expect the native teachers to talk at normal speed given that it was hard for them to follow the conversation.

However, as the study above merely points out the results as seen from the students' perspectives, we believe that further investigation on behalf of the native-English teachers' expectations is also significant to recognize. Furthermore, the result can be used as a benchmark to distinguish whether the NEST teachers and the EFL

students share the same expectations. Accordingly, two research questions were developed for this study:

- (1) What are the NESTs' expectations towards their EFL students?
- (2) What are the students' and NESTs' different expectations? (if any)

We believe that the findings of this study will become valuable inputs for EFL learners in general and university students in particular, as well as the NESTs and NNEST.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Native English Speaker Teacher (NEST)

Many works of literature offer interesting views about native and non-native teachers in language learning. Some even provide an insightful discussion regarding their competencies and students' perceptions of them. The terms themselves are debatable since the main objective focuses on teachers that teach the English language regardless of their diverse native languages. That is why this 'label' distinction will have no direct effect on the learning process. However, it is important to remember that native speakers are perceived as ideal English teachers in the Outer Circle [i.e., non-English speaking countries). There is a long-standing belief that since they were born in countries where the language is spoken thus it comes naturally to them (Karakas et al., 2016). For this reason, people simply assume that NESTs' way of teaching is likely to be more dynamic and communicative (Kramadibrata, 2015). Parents also tend to select schools that employ NESTs as their members of staff for their children (Kurniawati & Rizki, 2018). Hiring native speakers are believed to be one of the strategies in improving students' English proficiency (Jeon & Lee, 2006).

One of the reasons why NESTs are seen as the perfect English teachers is mainly because the language is being taught in their native language (Kirkpatrick, 2006). He further elaborates by mentioning five other reasons why native speakers are popular: NESTs are model of teachers whom students can refer to, NESTs are coded as the standard of English spoken, they represent power, NESTs have historical authority, meaning that their language comes naturally, and they are the best model to learn with.

However, it does not mean that NESTs are grammatically expert. Their language system accuracy within one sentence is usually based on their intuitions (Love & Ansaldo, 2010). Meanwhile, NNESTs are known to have a better grasp of understanding the grammatical point. In addition to that, a good mastery of the language or language familiarity/origin does not automatically guarantee the native speakers' status of becoming a 'good' teacher since there are pedagogical skills that need to be considered as well. Luong-Phan (2015) seems to agree by mentioning that NESTs face difficulty when it comes to pedagogical and non-pedagogical issues. The pedagogical issue mainly concerns teaching method, language issue, students' activity classroom preferences, and audibility barriers (Luong-Phan, 2015).

### 2.2 NEST and Students

Some people consider that the native itself is authentic thus whatever materials are being brought into the classroom is authentic as well. Accordingly, native speakers

should bring in and introduce their authentic culture to students (Budiarta, 2020). But for Kramsch (2014) the culture introduced is only for students' knowing and to fulfil the native's expectations towards learners. The syllabus should also be designed to promote intercultural knowledge in integrated ways; thus, it should give more emphasis on cross-culture understanding rather than just on one specific culture (Budiarta, 2020). He also adds that in terms of communication strategies, it seems that native speakers tend to adjust their way of speaking when it comes to foreign students. For example, rather than pronouncing a synonym of one unknown lexicon, they provide a detailed description of the specific word. When speaking with foreign students, they also like to communicate in an informal way of communication which involves the negotiation of meaning (Tudini, 2003). Contrary to the NNESTs teaching strategy, native teachers like to emphasize the sense of languages such as sound and idiomatic expression (Sari, 2019). Not to mention the fact that they are the best and authentic source for listening and speaking skills (Gibreel, 2018).

In terms of successful language learning, Kim (2011) states that native speakers expect students to be active in the classroom even though they make mistakes during the learning process. The importance of student-teacher mental representation of relationships during the learning process is another significant factor to zoom in. A good emotional link between both parties makes students feel more comfortable in the classroom (Syahabuddin et al., 2020). A positive environment and good school culture will also lead to successful learning (Camp, 2011). NESTs can reduce students' fear and create a learner-centre approach (Ramirez, 2013).

### **2.3 Previous Studies**

A lot of studies have discussed the roles and the benefits of non-native speaker teachers for EFL students in the ELT classroom. The studies ranged from students' perceptions toward the NNESTs as well as their competencies. However, we believe that the native's perceptions and expectations of their EFL students' learning outcomes are also essential for language learning. Based on our preliminary research, this study is going to shade light and compare the varied expectations of both EFL students and NEST teachers upon their language-learning practice.

Students agree that being taught by native speakers improve their overall achievement in language learning. In their opinion, compared to non-native teachers, NESTs motivate them in learning the language (Şahin, 2005). Based on the students' interviews and observation at Makasar State University, NEST teachers avoid teaching grammatical structures in their method of teaching during practice. In their perception, grammar is not a crucial thing to teach though they did try to correct students' mistakes (Ningsih, 2017).

The role of communication between native teachers and students has also been discussed (Sunardi, 2012). Based on the systemic functional approach from a 55-minutes-taped-English-conversation between a female American native speaker and a 22-years-old student shows that NEST prefers to let the student talk. Students take the central role whereas teachers support and assist their learning process without trying to dominate the classroom activity. Their friendly personality also plays an integral part to persuade those unwilling to participate and reluctant to talk.

Luo (2006) interviewed native teachers working with NNEST at one of the schools in Taiwan. It was mentioned how both parties partook in the shared-

responsibility of designing a lesson plan. A meeting was held once a week to discuss and examine the lesson plan and learning materials. However, [Lee and Chowdhury \(2018\)](#) insist that native teachers should join professional training to enhance their ability to understand the local (i.e., in this case, Korean) context of education. They argue that curriculum and cultural differences between countries may hinder the learning process. That is why they need additional training to adapt to and understand the Korean educational context.

All those above are studies that mainly focus on the small aspect of NESTs teaching performance, such as grammar and speaking activities. Meanwhile, this study tries to investigate some broader aspects by examining the natives' expectations toward their EFL learners. Since there are a limited number of references that can be found regarding NESTs' expectations toward their foreign students, this study hopefully provides some valuable inputs to support EFL studies.

### 3. METHODS

This is a qualitative study in which the interview guide was the only instrument selected to be used. It is a continuous study of the previous research that investigated students' expectations towards their NEST teachers (refer to [Gani et al., 2015](#)). Two native speakers were selected as the participants of this study. Both participants are male with ages ranged between 22-28 years old. They have been assigned to teach English at Universitas Syiah Kuala in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, for two years. They taught Speaking and Writing at two English classes: English as Academic Purposes (EAP) and Basic English Language Training (BELT). Both classes are part of a long intensive English Course that lasted for 10 weeks (6 hours per day).

A list of questionnaires was adopted from [Wu and Ke \(2009\)](#) by altering some parts of the questions into Yes/No and WH questions. The interview was conducted in about 30-45 minutes and was recorded by using a tape recorder. The questions inquired about NESTs' conversational speed speech during language teaching along with their reason for doing so, their tactic and action in encouraging or motivating students, their level choices of material: easy, medium, or hard, and whether the materials were based on the required syllabus or not as well as their reason for choosing as such.

Furthermore, questions 5-9 deal with native teachers' activities in the classroom such as accent, followed by classroom atmosphere, grammar attention, and the number of teaching materials given to the students. Questions 10-11 handle the grading system issues. The rest of the questions (12-14) inquired about the NESTs' authority in the classroom and tests.

The results of the interviews were further transcribed. Then, following [Mortensen \(2020\)](#), we: familiarized ourselves with the data, assigned preliminary codes to data for themes in order to describe the content, reviewed the themes, defined and named the themes, and finally, produced the report.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questions were provided for the two NESTs to examine their performances in teaching EFL students. The first teacher is labelled as (A) and the second is (B).



From the interviews, the questions were answered in about 30-45 minutes by each participant.

## **4.1 Results of the Interviews**

The interview process was carried out on the same day. While both interviewees were presented with the same set of questions, they were being interviewed separately thus neither one knew the other responses to the question. The results of the interview were categorized based on a specific category. A list of tables was also included to show the comparison between the current findings and the students' perception and expectation from the previous study by [Gani et al. \(2015\)](#).

### *4.1.1 NESTs prefer slow speed and standard accent*

One of the general challenges for both NEST teachers and EFL students in ELT classrooms is the fact that both parties are coming from opposite cultures and languages. The former lives and breathes the language while the latter is in the process of learning the language. For these reasons, most of the time EFL students face difficulty when talking with native teachers. They may feel it is difficult to follow or understand the NESTs. Therefore, the native teachers admit to trying to accommodate students' disadvantage by slowing down their speech accordingly. The following answers are coded as A (participant A) and B (participant B).

- A "I am speaking a lot slower than I normally do, and I try to dictate". [Dictate means pronouncing every syllable and every consonant]
- B "Oh ...I ... When I get nervous, I tend to speak quickly, but I usually try to speak slowly and calmly. At the beginning of each class or the beginning of the semester, when I speak too fast, they say...wow.... wow, too fast, Sir... and that is what helps me slow down so I try to speak slowly".

They confirmed that they try to adjust the way they speak with their students. Sometimes they expand the sentence just to explain the meaning of a word ([Budiarta, 2020](#)). They even used the same technique of communication with the interviewer during the interview session. They want to make sure that we understand what they try to explain.

- A "...and I try to dictate, dictate means like pronouncing every syllable and every consonant".

In terms of accents which sometimes may confuse those that are not familiar with it, they confirm that they usually use the standard accent, though sometimes they did use Indonesian pronunciation, too.

- A "Make up my accent? I like to use English in the Bahasa accent. Hm ...sometimes I do. For me, it's like...if the students are really confused about what I try to tell them then sometimes I try to say in Bahasa Indonesia".
- B "Oh no, I think students are going to come in context with a lot of different kinds of English speakers whether they come from Australia or Britain or the United States. A variety of accents to learn, so I think I try not to make up my accent, I just leave it at my own accent".

Meanwhile, students prefer to be corrected when they mispronounce a word (Gani et al., 2015). However, one of the participants points out the common obstacle that leads to miscommunication and misunderstanding faced by many EFL learners is the accent. B explains that each country has its accent distinction that slightly or completely has a different pronunciation. Therefore, students are expected to learn and be familiar with these accents' varieties. The other participant also confesses to having to perform code-switching in the classroom to stress out their point to come across. Table 1 shows the students' and teachers' similar expectations related to speed and accent in communication.

**Table 1.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs' expectations
1	Speaking speed	Normal speed	Slow/normal speed
2	Accents	More standard accent	Standard accents Maintain his accent

As shown in Table 1, both teachers and students have received the same treatments. This should be maintained to achieve learning satisfaction.

#### 4.1.2 NESTs motivate and encourage students

On the issue of motivation and encouragement, the participants acknowledge the benefit of the psychological driving-force to boost students' self-confidence. It brings positive effects for the learners.

- A "How many times do I give motivation? Em ...oh...yup, I think I encourage them more, I always encourage them to get their confidence".
- B "Em...I think I try to build a positive classroom environment... and I don't often correct my students' English if they make a mistake...like just a simple mistake, if I see that they keep repeating the same mistake, for example, some students will say 'honestly' instead of 'onestly', em that will be something that I should encourage with the whole class. I think I try to provide a positive classroom. but I am most happy, most excited when they do something really amazing. So, when they do something really well, I try to take the moment to appreciate that".

Given the significant role that motivation plays in the learning process, the NESTs try to always motivate the students. Table 2 shows that they harbour the same expectation as EFL students. The previous study revealed that students expect NEST teachers to encourage them during the learning process, with the average score as of M=8.02 (Gani et al., 2015).

**Table 2.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani, et.al, 2015)	NESTs' expectations
3	Encouragement in class	Much encouragement	Much encouragement

#### 4.1.3 The materials given went from easy to difficult level

Native speakers typically provide materials that depend on students' level. At the beginning of the semester, they usually used easy level material but it is gradually progressing as student exhibits advanced growth of development during their learning

process. Participant B also tries to incorporate intercultural understanding into the syllabus. It is believed that cultural sensitivity will improve and enhance students' knowledge of language (Budiarta, 2020).

- A "Ah, I think, in the beginning, I usually give them such an easy task like how they can be comfortable with the material, and with time, I make it harder. It depends on the class, though. If the materials are too hard, they won't know what to do or they are very quiet and they feel too embarrassed to answer anything or say anything".
- B "Em ...I think that depends on the students' level, for example at the beginning of the class, we try to learn about vocabulary and go to a daily situation that we might face. If the students are more advanced, it's interesting to engage them in cross-cultural dialogue. I think the students who learn new languages are often also interested to understand different cultures. and that's one benefit of having a native speaker. I have a lot of knowledge about my own native culture and my students have a lot of knowledge about their own culture, and together we can work to build understanding between us. So that it's really fun".

Furthermore, rather than focusing on tests or assignments, NESTs stress out their priority on various classroom activities. A mixture of fun and creative activity helps to increase students' ability in improving their language skills such as speaking skills. Table 3 shows both parties' similar expectations on assignment.

**Table 3.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani, et.al, 2015)	NESTs' expectations
3	Assignment	A bit hard assignment	From low to hard
4	Activities in class	A bit more activities	More activities

The native speaker teachers further added that:

- A "We try to do more activities based on teaching. So, I'll tend to focus on my classes or have students speaking by themselves".
- B "More activities are better".

#### 4.1.4 Classroom atmosphere should be fun and friendly

NESTs also expect a more casual, relax, but not too loud atmosphere in the classroom. Native teachers thrive to create a friendly and communicative environment for students in the classroom to help improve their level of confidence (Sunardi, 2012). Table 4 indicates that students expect the same positive environment in the classroom.

**Table 4.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs' expectations
5	Classroom atmosphere	Relaxed	Relaxed
6	Attitude towards students	Like friends	Like friends

Further explanations by the teachers are as the following:

- A "Yea, actually I like the class atmosphere to be rather friendly and I like to be loud but not too loud. I think I prefer to be loud than quiet because if it's loud, it means they are having a good time".



- B “I like my classroom more casual, yea. more relax, em...I think that students learn based on when they feel like having fun so I try to make my classes more relax than serious, I try to make them enjoy the learning”.

The teachers try to create a friendly and relaxed environment when teaching the EFL students because they believed that by being relaxed, learning would be more comfortable. Moreover, they also try to be funny (i.e., making jokes) to make the students more comfortable and not nervous to ask them questions if they do not understand something while learning. This is as explained in the following excerpts.

- A “I try to be friendly and make a joke. But... not like friendly like they can like WA [WhatsApp] me at ten o'clock at night and say 'let's have coffee'. It's more like they can WA me if they ask questions about class and maybe after the class, we can go and have coffee and you know *duduk-duduk bersama* (sit together), but during classes, I try to be okay”.
- B “Em...I try, I do. I think it is necessary for speaking class, more valuable if like students and teachers are on the same level, it will make them comfortable to ask me a question and I am comfortable to give them an answer, too...yea...more friendly, yea”.

#### 4.1.5 Authentic materials are more important than syllabus design

Surprisingly, instead of using the syllabus that has been arranged, NESTs organize and create their own outline course for teaching or simply mixed them both.

- A “No... I don't have to follow the syllabus or books that I have to follow. I most like to make it on my own because I just think...em...like for speaking classes...in general, I do the activity and the students speak as much as they can during a lesson. So, I don't necessarily have to be following the collection. It's more like I am giving them activities and they will work and have fun together”.
- B “I try to create a syllabus at the beginning of each semester with bright topics, and I like to give them more fun activities, or maybe, for example, when something happens in Banda Aceh or in the world that is interesting to talk about. Sometimes I try to follow the syllabus. If it is helpful, and the students will see the syllabus at the beginning of the semester, I give them freedom in learning”.

From the interview, it can be said that NEST teachers do not adhere to the conventional practice of following the syllabus design. They tend to give students the free option, yet the beneficial choice of classroom activities that help increase their language competence. Somehow, this finding goes up against what students expect from native teachers. Gani et al. (2015) claim that students expect the NESTs to follow the syllabus. These diverse expectations can be a valuable input for the institution's administrator when preparing the syllabus.

**Table 5.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs' expectations
7.	Syllabus	More following syllabus	Don't follow the syllabus

#### 4.1.6 Correcting grammar and pronunciation is not a must

The grammar correction and pronunciation alteration were seen as something trivial and are too simple to be concern about. Although now and then students' grammatical errors attract attention and were being corrected, NESTs do not have the

fixation attitude to correct them. In their opinion, linguistic deviance and incorrect pronunciation do not affect the whole purpose of speaking.

- A “With my lower-level classes, I think grammar lesson point, like they can convey what they want to say and it’s okay. With my higher-level classes, I would correct them if necessary. If I always tell them in the very beginning...this is wrong that is wrong, it will make them not confident in speaking”.
- B “Em ...I think that’s a hard question. Yes and no. I think when students come from different levels and if one of them has good grammar and others maybe not have good grammar, I try not to correct the students unless I don’t understand something. I let the students just talk because I think if students get too nervous, and I will correct them for the speaking, or they think that they get nervous to talk and that’s one thing I don’t want in class. I want to make my students feel confident when they speak so I think it’s not necessary to correct my students’ grammar so often”.

Interestingly, native teachers did not so lenient and have the same standard when it comes to the higher-level students as they admit to correcting their grammatical errors “*if necessary*”. The NESTs expect them to be able to speak in correct sentences.

- A “Yea, that’s also the same as grammar. Sometimes if they have mispronounced something then I would correct them otherwise, yea, just the same as grammar”.
- B “Pronunciation? Em same as grammar, I would say I try to...only if I really don’t understand what’s going on or if the students ask for clarification”.

An exception was being made for the beginner students seeing as frequent and repeated correction can distract their focus and embarrassed them. B added that negotiation of meaning occurred during the learning process. Tudini (2003) explains that when speaking with foreign students, negotiation of meaning takes place for clarification. The students’ and NESTs’ contrast expectations are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Students’ and NESTs’ expectations.

No	Items	Students’ expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs’ expectations
8	Grammar point	Pay more attention to grammar	Don’t pay attention to it except if there is a misunderstanding
9	Pronunciation correcting	Pay more attention to pronunciation	Correct wrong pronunciation only if there is a misunderstanding

#### 4.1.7 Grading should be based on students’ participation

Concerning grading, the NESTs do not enforce grading practice. They also do not grade their students strictly.

- A “Em... I don’t grade. For the TOEFL class, I don’t give them scores because it’s not for grading. It’s like, they come voluntarily if they come, if they don’t come there will be no punishment. It’s for them to help them improve their own English speaking for their TOEFL”.
- B “Grade students strictly? No, ha-ha! I can’t really grade my students and at the beginning of the class, I tell them that their grades much depend on their participation in my class...so, much is about participating. And much about students talking, if the students are just standing at the corner, playing

on their phone...em ...it makes me angry. But if the students are trying and having fun or even, they are not really having fun at least they are trying. To me, they want to learn”.

It is important to point out that NESTs and students have different expectations on how students should be assessed. While NESTs emphasize the process and the effort of learning, students pay high attention to the whole evaluation procedure and subsequently how they would be graded. The assessment process must be established and accurate. The students’ expectations towards grading relate to the Indonesian culture that grading scores must always be obvious. To avoid misunderstanding, intercultural knowledge in the grading system should be introduced so that students understand if NESTs do not always grade them.

Furthermore, rather than having a list of assessment guidelines, native teachers like to take notes of their students’ improvement to compensate for their grading evaluation. They insist on paying attention, taking a note at the beginning of the semester or during the process of learning. Unfortunately, we did not ask for more details about these notes. Further research may be conducted on this matter. Table 7 shows their expectations.

**Table 7.** Students’ and NESTs’ expectations.

No	Items	Students’ expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs’ expectations
10	Grading system	A bit stricter grading	Not strict
11	Grading based on	Effort	Effort/performance

This is also supported by the excerpts of the interviews:

- A “Yea... again... I don’t take grades. I would make notes, though. I make notes for myself, and I don’t have to make a report”.
- B “I will take notes at the beginning of the semester. If a student is very brave to talk and he has a wide range of vocabulary and then at the end of the semester, I will say, okay, the vocabulary is going higher. He also speaks more fluently and more accurately. So, I will take a note of each student”.

#### 4.1.8 Homework

NESTs do not enforce homework on their EFL students. The first speaker said that there is no assignment or test in his class, while the second speaker usually asks students to complete their exercises in every meeting and tests should be done at the end of the session.

- A “I don’t give homework. If I give them homework, they may not do it. I think, if I had a class, I will just grade them at the end”.
- B “I usually don’t give any homework. But I give exercises in every single class. I think exercises like... doing role-plays, dialogues, and playing games. Because most of my classes are speaking, I try to give an assignment but not a necessary test, but a big project so that they can speak fluently”.

For NESTs, learning activities in the classroom will be more meaningful than homework. They can monitor the students and give feedback during the lesson. Table 8 shows both parties’ expectations of homework/tests.

**Table 8.** Students' and NESTs' expectations.

No	Items	Students' expectations (Gani et al., 2015)	NESTs' expectations
13	Amount of assignment given	A bit more assignment	No test/assignment given, only exercises
14	Frequency of test given	A bit more test	Only test at the end More exercises during class

## 4.2 NEST versus Students' Expectations

The results suggest that there were some similar expectations between the EFL students and the NEST teachers. The results of this study were being compared to [Gani et al.'s \(2015\)](#) previous research to find out the synchronized and/or diverse connection factor that can be analysed. Those are numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11. The NESTs expect a friendly relationship between the teacher and students in/out of the classroom. In their opinion, a strong teacher-student emotional relationship lends a hand in supporting the learning process. There were times the teachers and their students met outside of the class schedule to spend some casual times together: like having some coffee or enjoying potluck in a group. The same can be said about the EFL students' expectations. Based on their experiences of learning with native speakers, a friendly environment was a regularly normal atmosphere in the classroom which provides some kind of support to students. Consequently, the first and second authors of this paper shared this similar experience during their time studying abroad. The NESTs often invited them to have a snack and drink together either in the café or merely brought in the food to the class. This positive environment helps learners like the class and learns better.

Another similar expectation is related to the grading system. Both NESTs and EFL learners prefer to be graded base on their efforts. The students expected that their efforts were being rewarded in a good way and not being looked down upon should their grades are low. To summarize, positive encouragement is always needed by EFL students.

There are also some different expectations between NEST teachers and the students. Those are numbers 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14. For example, NESTs expect students to speak up and not be afraid of making mistakes. Additionally, NESTs do not always correct students' mistakes. Correction only takes place to prevent misunderstanding. The students, on the other hand, want to be corrected every time they make mistakes especially the grammatical errors and pronunciation. [Gani et al. \(2015\)](#) reveal that having NEST teachers in ELT classroom give more benefits for EFL students. One of them is the opportunity for students to learn authentic pronunciation thus having the chance to try to imitate the articulation and emulate the native's accent. If students' mistakes are not being corrected, they will probably think that they are saying the right thing or worst doubting their own capability. To avoid this problem, rules or learning contracts between teacher and students should be formulated and agreed-on on at the first meeting. In fact, teachers should not feel reluctant to correct students' mistakes and should ask for more clarifications when needed. Another unexpected result was that NESTs do not always follow the syllabi when teaching. They combine the designed-syllabus with their own lesson plans. The reason for the integrated syllabus is to ensure that many fitting materials were being provided for students. As confirmed by B, a native origin teacher has the chance to teach authentic

English as well as its people and cultures. The latter two aspects are deemed to be significant seeing that students may visit or study in the Inner Circle countries (i.e., English speaking countries) one day, thus having prior knowledge about its cultures is important.

In addition, students expect the teacher to follow the syllabus. This finding is a valuable input for the institution. The institution may adjust the syllabi and add more topics on intercultural knowledge. Lee and Chowdhury (2018) claim that NEST teachers should have professional training in teaching to adapt them to the EFL learners' social and cultural context. Luo (2006) also confirms that the NEST can work together with local teachers and discuss the lesson plan. This will make NESTs responsible for their own teaching and material. This is also one way to avoid overlapping materials since students also study with different classes and teachers.

Seeing as some similarity and contrast expectations appeared in this study, we believed that both teachers and students must be aware and conscious of each other's expectations. These shared-expectations should be maintained to enforce a harmonious environment in the classroom. While diverse expectations may cause concern among the instructors and raised some problems with the institution's policy, it is worth to discuss cross-cultural understanding seeing as mutual understanding between NESTs and EFL students is important.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The goal of this study is to find out the NEST teachers' expectations towards the EFL students in Aceh, Indonesia. The results then are being compared to the students' expectations from a previous study by Gani et al. (2015). The results reveal that both NESTs and EFL students shared some similar expectations regarding fun activities in and outside of the classroom when it comes to language learning, a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, a friends-like relationship with the instructor, and using standard accents in teaching. Different expectations are mainly about mistake and error corrections, assignment policy, and whether or not NESTs should follow the syllabus that has been designed by the institution. The differences are due to different background of culture that can make either students or teachers view something from their culture. Therefore, we propose the following suggestions:

- Involving native teachers to participate in the syllabus design, thus they can contribute to new ideas.
- Proposing a contract of agreement to the students at the start of the semester, especially on the subject of when to correct, what to correct, and so on.
- Learning EFL learners' cultures to avoid misunderstanding.

For future consideration, it is important to note that the data for this research is limited to only two NEST participants which came from the same country. The respondents may have the same context so the answers are quite similar. More respondents from different countries will bring in various aspects for future study on this topic.

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